

REMARKS

This amendment is being filed in response to an Office action mailed on 09/16/2005, in which the Examiner said that claims 1-19 were pending, that
5 claims 1-4 and 12 were rejected, and that claims 5-11 and 13-19 were objected to. In this amendment, claims 1-4 and 12 are canceled, claims 5, 9-11, 13, 14, and 16-19 are amended to overcome the objections of the Examiner, and new claims 20-22 are added.

10 **Claims Rejected under 35 USC §102**

The Examiner said that claims 1-4 and 12 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,779,703 to Benoist. In this amendment, claims 1-4 and 12 are canceled.

15 **Allowable Subject Matter**

The Examiner said that claims 5-11 and 13-19 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

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In this amendment, this has been done, with claims 5 and 9-11 each being rewritten to include the limitations of claim 1, and with claims 13 and 17-19 being rewritten to include the limitations of claim 12. Since claims 6-8 originally depended from claim 5, and since claim 15 originally depended from claim 13,
25 these dependent claims remain in their original form.

Claims 14 and 16, which also originally depended from claim 13, also retain their original dependency, with "step f)" being changed to "step d)" in claim 14 to correspond the relettered sequence of steps in claim 13, as rewritten herein, and
30 with the punctuation of claim 16 being modified to clarify the fact that the three

steps listed in this claim are each part of step g).

5 In claims 10 and 11, "said clamping screw," for which there is no antecedent basis, has been changed to "said pin-clamping" screw. Support for this change is found in the application as filed on page 13, lines 23-28 and page 14, lines 9-12, where it is indicated that both types of pin-clamping screws have flexible sections.

New Claims

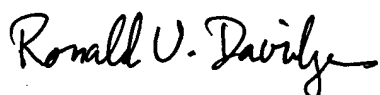
10 New claims 20-22 are added herein, with each of these new claims having the additional limitations of the canceled claims 2-3 as originally presented, but with these new claims being dependent from claim 5, as amended herein, instead of from the canceled claim 1.

15 Conclusions

The Applicant respectfully submits that the application, including claims 5-11 and 13-22, is now in condition for allowance, and that action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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